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Message Text

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10
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /060 W
---------- 007711
R 101635Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2602

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1278

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: DISSIDENT COMMUNIST PARTY DECLARES ITS PAPER IS
IN SERIOUS FINANCIAL TROUBLE

1. THE FEBRUARY 10 EDITION OF AVGHI, THE PAPER OF THE DISSIDENT COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE INTERIOR (KKE- INTERIOR), PUBLISHED AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PARTY'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE SUGGESTING THAT THE PAPER IS IN FINANCIAL TROUBLE. THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S DECLARATION, WHICH COVERS ONE HALF OF THE PAPER'S FRONT PAGE, STATES THE DAILY PUBLICATION OF THE PAPER CANNOT CONTINUE UNLESS THERE IS A "RAPID AND SURE INCREASE IN CIRCULATION" AND UNLESS IT RAPIDLY COLLECTS 10 MILLION REPEAT TEN MILLION DRACHMAS (ABOUT $286,000) TO MEET ITS "OBLIGATIONS", MODERNIZE ITS PLANT, AND TO SET IT ON A SOUND FINANCIAL BASE.

2. THE PAPER CALLS ON ALL THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE PARTY TO JOIN IN A "BATTLE FOR AVGHI". AS THE DECLARATION MAKES CLEAR, A CRITICAL PHASE OF THE BATTLE IS THE COLLECTION OF THE NEEDED 10 MILLION DRACHMAS. IN MEETING THIS COLLECTION GOAL THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATES THAT IT HOPES TO SELL ONE THOUSAND 5,000 DRACHMA CONTRIBUTORY CERTIFICATES IN GREECE, 500 SUCH CERTI-FICATES ABROAD. THE REMAINING 2,500 DRACHMAS, THE ANNOUNCEMENT SAYS, ARE TO BE COLLECTED FROM ADULT AND YOUTH MEMBERS OF THE KKE (INTERIOR).
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3. COMMENT: IF THE KKE (INTERIOR)'S STATEMENT CAN BE TAKEN AT FACE VALUE -- AND WE BELIEVE IT PROBABLY CAN -- WHATEVER MONEY THE PARTY AND THE PAPER HAVE BEEN RECEIVING FROM ABROAD IS NOT ENOUGH TO KEEP AVGHI AFLOAT. AMONG THE FEW IN GREECE CELEBRATING THE AVGHI ANNOUNCEMENT ARE THE MOSCOW-BASED COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE EXTERIOR WHICH WOULD BE OVERJOYED TO SEE ITS RIVAL, THE INTERIOR PARTY, LOSE ITS NEWSPAPER.

4. AVGHI'S DIFFICULTIES ARE IN SHARP DISTINCTION TO THE APPARENT ROBUST HEALTH OF THE EXTERIOR'S PAPER RIZOSPASTIS WHICH, IT IS RUMORED, IS ABOUT TO PAY SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS FOR NEW PRESSES. RIZOSPASTIS "ECONOMIC" SUCCSS CAN BE EXPLAINED NEITHER BY ITS CIRCULATION -- WHICH IS PUNY-- NOR BY ADVERTISING REVENUES - WHICH ARE MINIMAL. THE KKE (EXTERIOR) SUBSIDIZES IT HEAVILY -- NO DOUBT WITH A HELPING HAND FROM ITS MOSCOW SPONSORS.
KUBISCH

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